

CARE AND REPAIR FORUM SCOTLAND
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2010
AT TOUCHBASE BUSINESS CENTRE, EDINBURGH

Present: David Belfall, Chair
Richard Grant, Vice Chair
Hanna McCulloch, SDEF
Stewart Wilson, Region 1
Judith Leslie, Region 2
Beverley Jones, Region 3
Les Robertson, Region 4
Kay Hutcheson, AgeScotland
Cllr Karen Clark, COSLA
Mike Martin, NHS
Adam Drummond, Perthshire C&R
Robert Thomson, National Director
Valerie Sneddon, Scottish Government

1. Welcome and Apologies

David welcomed those attending. Apologies were received from Ronnie McColl, Charles Murphy and Iain Davidson. Robert issued papers to new Board members in advance of Agenda item 6.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest reported against any agenda items.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed subject to the following amendments:

- Page 2 Recruitment of New Staff: Policy and Standard's Officer to read Policy and Standards Officer
- Page 2 Conference 2010: last line to read, 'The Board asked that the date be changed to the last week in March to allow for the Minister and other party representatives to attend for a discussion panel session prior to the election in May'.
- Page 3 National Update: last bullet point to read, 'Six offices have problems but 34 have not reported any difficulties'.

4. Matters Arising

The conference date has been rearranged for Friday 25th March 2011. The Board Strategy Day is arranged for Friday 8th October 2010. The theme for the day will be 'Where do we aim to be in five years time?' The discussion will include the financial outlook, income generation and views on charging.

5. National Director's Report

New Staff

Hazel McFarlane and James Grant commenced employment on 8th July. They have visited some Care and Repair offices, met with clients in their homes, and attended conference and seminar events as part of their induction. Hazel has been updating the office databases and organising the new logo, letterheads and promotional materials, as well as updating the information on the services that are provided by C&R offices. Jim has been concentrating on drafting the Good Practice Guidance and collating 2009/10 statistics from C&R offices. There will be an opportunity for Board members to meet Jim and Hazel at the Board strategy day on 8 October.

Regional Meetings

The first regional meetings were held in June. Each region has nominated a representative to the Board of Care and Repair Scotland.

The representatives are:

Stewart Wilson – Western Isles Care and Repair

Judith Leslie - Angus Care and Repair

Bev Jones - East Lothian Care and Repair

Les Robertson - Lomond & Clyde Care and Repair

The next meetings are arranged for the following dates:

Region 1: 7 September

Region 2: 21 September

Region 3: 28 September

Region 4: 22 September

Reshaping Care for Older People Programme

Mike reported on the on-going consultation process which included 600 online surveys, 1000 person MORI poll and 5,000 telephone interviews and approx 2,000 people attending various regional events. People for the most part want to stay in their own home and seem to accept the need for mixed private and government funding. It is intended that a ten year delivery plan will be drafted by Christmas. The national delivery plan will encourage local delivery without being too prescriptive. It will however be ambitious in its aims and will require a resource allocation. The plan will envisage NHS, Councils and Third Sector organisations working together. The Fresh Thinking debate is a shorter term discussion and is almost a green paper whereas the Wider Planning for Older People agenda is looking much further forward. There will be no new money available and therefore the key will be to redirect resources from current areas of spend such as emergency admissions to enable investment in community provision. Consideration is currently being given to establishing a pooled budget than can provide partnerships with a "change fund" to stimulate reinvestment. Work is currently underway to explore the scope for such a change fund , including the size of the fund, how it sits within "core budgets" and the governance arrangements necessary to enable partnerships to manage the fund effectively. The aim is to have the arrangements agreed and in place for 2011/12 financial year.

MOD

Care and Repair in England has been approached by the MOD to ask if they would co-ordinate with their colleagues in Scotland and Wales a service that would provide adaptations to the homes of wounded service personnel returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. At the moment, the MOD is concerned that while it can provide adaptations to properties which it owns, it lacks the ability to deliver adaptations in cases where the disabled person owns their own home or is returning to live in their parents' privately owned home. Malcolm Ramsay, Communications, Policy & Research Manager, Foundations has met with

Valerie and SG colleagues to discuss how the proposed scheme might work in Scotland. The MOD occupational therapists will do assessments but it is unclear if these will be needs based or property based. It was agreed to discuss current local arrangements for assessments at the regional meetings. Kay suggested that Poppy Scotland may be able to assist. Valerie agreed that Robert would be invited to any further discussions with Malcolm Ramsay.

Outcome Measures

The Board committed to develop new outcome measures for Care and Repair services in its Implementation Plan that was agreed with Scottish Government in February. The Plan commits us to developing a set of outcome measures during October – December 2010. David, Richard and Robert have met together to discuss how we might proceed and have concluded that we will need to engage the services of a consultant to assist us with this work. The next stage is to draft a consultant's brief that would be sent out with an invitation to tender to selected consultants/universities that have shown an aptitude for this area of research. The brief will be circulated to Board members before issue. At this stage the consultancy was expected to cost £10-15K plus expenses. The outcome measures will link into a 'simple' accreditation scheme. Care and Repair Scotland will have no powers to enforce such a scheme but can provide information to funders and comment on the performance of local offices. Mike offered the assistance of consultants who were currently working for the Joint Improvement Team. Robert will send the brief to Mike. Mike also undertook to provide sight of the current Telecare outcome measures.

Office Equipment

The Board agreed at the April meeting to allow spend of up to £3,000 for a new photocopier and up to £3,000 for new computers and office equipment. These items have now been purchased within the agreed budgets.

Annual Report

David and Robert are working together to produce an annual report. Once the accounts are approved, a draft report should be available for the Board to comment on by end September.

Office Lease 135 Buchanan Street

The John Lewis Partnership has written to advise us that as from 13 August 2010 they have bought the buildings 131 – 137 Buchanan Street. Our office lease has been assigned and sold to them by LNC Real Estate Ltd.

Corporation Tax

Following discussions with HM Revenue and Customs, we have obtained an exemption from filing a return until 2015.

Lochaber Equipment Store

Lochaber Care and Repair has worked in partnership with the NHS to build a store for aids and equipment for disabled people. The store has been custom fitted by small repairs staff and when opened in late September will be administered by the Care and Repair manager and her team.

Letter to Council Leaders

David has written to every Council Leader in Scotland to advise them of the new arrangements for coordinating Care and Repair services in Scotland. The text of the letter was issued to Board members.

Local issues

Since the last board meeting South Ayrshire Council has awarded the contract for Care and Repair services to the Wise Group with effect from 1 October. However, information is limited and there does not seem to be any takeover plan. David has written to the Council Leader to check that the Wise Group

will comply with the national standards and good practice guidelines, and to offer advice and assistance from Care and Repair Scotland in ensuring that the new arrangements work smoothly and successfully.

Karen has been given assurances that no decision will be taken about Aberdeenshire until a Council meeting is held in November. Karen and Robert have been invited to the meeting and will report any outcomes to the Board.

Robert has written to Council members in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire. The Head of Housing in Renfrewshire has confirmed that she is looking for cost savings and the in-house model appeared to be the best way of achieving these. Scott and the Director of Bridgewater HA subsequently met with the Council offered to look at ways of making savings/fundraising. East Renfrewshire's solicitor has contacted Robert to discuss the situation as he intends to advise both Councils not to proceed with an in-house model.

Robert has had further discussions with Orkney Council. The Council confirms that it is considering putting C&R out for tender but not until the end of the year.

6. Adoption of Articles

Following discussion with HBJ Gateley Wareing, it was proposed to adopt the new articles by mail, given the geographical coverage of the Board. It was noted that the new Articles are not a very elegant document but this is a reflection of the difficulties in undoing an existing legal structure to replace it with a Board where effectively each member is a Director. It was agreed that the process should proceed as quickly as possible. Kay asked about the quorum of two and it was agreed that this could always be raised at a later time if it caused problems.

7. National Policy Statement

Richard introduced the subject by referring to the various responses to the consultation on a National Policy Statement. The responses were encouraging and he proposed that the Board discuss three main areas and finalise their viewpoint at the Strategy Day on 8th October. The main issues that require discussion and decision are:

- Aims/Core clients/Core services
- Fundraising/Charging
- Governance/Equalities

The main points developed in the discussion were:

- Care and repair started off as a housing organisation but now occupies an intermediate position between housing and social care
- We focus on housing and repairs in order to help the person. This has been our key area of success in the past and we should not give it up
- We cannot afford to lose the link with private sector housing
- We need to keep the care element alongside the delivery of repairs
- We should move slightly towards emphasising that we deliver on housing conditions rather than just housing quality
- It may be best to stay with the 60+ age group
- The main tenure group should remain owners but expand to private tenants if the owner of the property requests assistance
- The handyperson schemes should remain tenure neutral

- The NPS could state a minimum level of service but encourage local authorities to increase it
- The NPS could explain the core services and then allow other services to branch out from those
- This is the best and worst of times to be making a policy statement as we don't want to be trapped into something today that is not relevant tomorrow. The election in May, for example, could shift the direction of policy
- There is a desire from Scottish Government to examine a business model of Care and Repair that has the capacity to generate income
- The description of services should perhaps be 'older or disabled' rather than 'older and disabled' people.

David asked Richard to consider drafting a section of the statement in time for the Strategy Day so that Board members could get a feel for the style and content of the document.

8. Good Practice Guide

The Board considered draft chapter headings and two sample chapters that have been written by Jim. Robert explained that the intention was to produce objective guidance on a range of subjects but avoiding detailed operational issues. It was agreed to include a chapter on equalities issues and inclusive communities. It was suggested that section 2 is largely irrelevant to the target audience. The guide will be updated on the website and the style should reflect that, with shorter paragraphs and web links to other sites. There needs to be case studies and practice from around the country to encourage and promote the replication of good practice. The guide should be seen as an 'organic' document that will eventually link into a training programme.

9. Website

Robert showed a trial version of the website. There were technical difficulties and he will send Board members a web link to allow them to view the pages. It was agreed that the need for a Members page will be discussed at the regional meetings. The idea of a forum had been raised at the time of the review but it was felt that moderating it could prove problematic. It was suggested that the office search facility should include postcodes.

10. Annual Accounts

The financial statements for the year ended March 2010 were approved subject to the following amendments:

- Page 2, remove the sentence: 'Each new Trustee is linked with a serving Trustee and provided with a structured induction programme over the first year.'
- Page 4, remove the sentence: 'The results of the review have not been published at the time of preparing the accounts.'

Following these amendments, David and Richard will sign the report and accounts and Robert will send copies to OSCR and Companies House.

11. Half Year Financial Statement

The statement showed half year adjustments to the projected annual expenditure. The Board approved the statement.

12. A.O.C.B.

Les advised that some time ago he was asked to speak at an accident prevention conference and he has discovered the publicity material advertises that he is representing the Care and Repair Scotland Board. The Board members confirmed that they are happy for Les to represent them at the event.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Friday 5th December at 1.00am in Touchbase Business Centre, Edinburgh. Lunch will be provided.